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SOVIET USE OF ASSASSINATION AND KIDNAPPING

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Introduction

It has long been known that the Soviet state security service (currently the KGB) resorts to abduction and murder to combat what are considered to be actual or potential threats to the Soviet regime. These techniques, frequently designated as "executive action"[1] and known within the KGB as "liquid affairs" (Mokryye Dela), can be and are employed abroad as well as within the borders of the USSR. They have been used against Soviet citizens, Soviet emigres and even foreign nationals. A list of those who have fallen victim to such action over the years would be a very long one and would include even the co-founder of the Soviet state, Leon TROTSKY. Several well known Soviet assassination operations which have occurred since the rise of KHRUSHCHEV attest to the fact that the present leadership of the USSR still employs this method of dealing with its enemies.

The sudden disappearance or unexpected death of a person known to possess anti-Soviet convictions immediately raises the suspicion of Soviet involvement. Because it is often impossible to prove who is responsible

1. Strictly speaking, the term "executive action" encompasses diversionary activities (such as sabotage) as well as terroristic activities. This paper, however, discusses only the terroristic aspect of Soviet executive action, namely kidnapping and assassination.

for such incidents, Soviet intelligence is frequently blamed and is undoubtedly credited with successes it actually has not achieved. On the other hand, even in cases where the Soviet hand is obvious, investigation often produces only fragmentary information, due to the KGB ability to camouflage its trail. In addition, Soviet intelligence is doubtless involved in incidents that never become officially recognized as executive action, such as assassinations which are recorded as accidents, suicide, or natural deaths.

All of the factors cited above have helped to obscure Soviet practices in regard to assassinations and abductions outside the USSR. Certain observations can be made, however, which will help to put these practices into their proper perspective. These observations are set forth in the following paragraphs and are based on information produced by the investigation of known or suspected Soviet operations which have occurred since World War II, as well as from information supplied by defectors during this period.

Targets

The large numbers of former citizens of the USSR (and of imperial Russia) living abroad in protest against the Soviet regime have been a continuing cause for concern to the Soviets since the early twenties.

Reducing and keeping to a minimum the potential threat to the regime represented by these emigres is one of the functions of the state security service. Soviet intelligence seeks to neutralize, discredit and destroy anti-Soviet groups by luring emigres back to the USSR, by penetrating emigre organizations, and by kidnapping or murdering individual emigres considered to be particularly dangerous.

Emigre leaders who participate in anti-Soviet activities have been primary targets of Soviet abduction or assassination operations. Such operations are sometimes designed to demonstrate that the Soviet regime can strike its enemies anywhere in the world. The Soviets hope thereby to create fear, unrest, confusion and dissension within emigre organizations and at the same time deter other emigres from joining their ranks. The planned assassination of NTS leader Georgiy S. OKOLOVICH in February 1954 represented a particularly significant step toward achieving this goal, but the act was not carried out because of the defection of state security Captain Nikolay KHOKHLOV.

On the other hand, assassinations of some emigre leaders have been carried out so skillfully as to leave the impression that the victims died from natural causes. Details of some of the techniques used to achieve this were brought to light in 1961 when professional KGB assassin Bogdan STASHINSKIY defected to the West and revealed that he had successfully

performed two such missions. In 1957 he killed Ukrainian emigre writer Lev REBET in Munich with a poison vapor gun which left the victim dead of an apparent heart attack. In 1959, the same type of weapon was used on Ukrainian emigre leader Stepan BANDERA, although BANDERA's death was never fully accepted as having been from natural causes. These cases are discussed in more detail later in this paper.

Executive action is also triggered by any signs of possible disloyalty on the part of Soviet officials abroad. The Soviets have gone to great lengths in the past to silence their intelligence officers who have defected, as evidenced by the assassination of former state security officer Ignace REISS in 1937 and the unexplained "suicide" of former Soviet military intelligence officer Walter KRIVITSKY in 1941. In the post-war era, their determination to prevent such defections was vividly demonstrated by the unsuccessful attempt to force the wife of Vladimir PETROV to return to the Soviet Union from Australia after his defection in April 1954. The practice of physical restraint applies with equal force to other Soviet officials who attempt to defect or are suspected of being on the verge of doing so. Examples were witnessed in Calcutta, India in January 1958 and Rangoon, Burma in May 1959. The respective victims, Aleksandr

F. ZELENOVSKIY and Mikhail I. STRYGIN, were both portrayed by the Soviets as mental cases, were taken into custody by means of strong-arm tactics, and were forcibly removed to the USSR in a matter of days.

Foreign nationals are sometimes victims of Soviet executive action. The targets who fall into this category may be indigenous agents who have become suspect or former citizens of Satellite countries who have turned against the Soviet regime. In the latter case, actions against such individuals are usually carried out through the corresponding Satellite intelligence service, aided and abetted by soviet state security. The abductions of Dr. Walter LINSE and Bohumil LAUSMAN exemplify this type of operation. LINSE had fled East Germany in 1947 and later became a leader of the "Society of Free Jurists," an anti-Communist organization that the Soviets considered particularly dangerous. He was kidnapped from West Berlin in July 1952 by agents of the East German security service, with the full knowledge and approval of soviet state security; he was later turned over to Soviet authorities in Karlshorst, East Berlin and eventually sentenced

to imprisonment in the USSR.[2] LAUSMAN, a prominent Czech anti-Communist who had fled to the West in 1949, disappeared from Vienna in 1953. It was later learned that he had been kidnapped by agents of Czech intelligence, with the official sanction of Moscow. The soviet state security rezidentura in Vienna also had been directed to assist the operation by supplying a car for transporting LAUSMAN to Prague and arranging for the vehicle to have free passage through the Soviet Zone of Austria.

Foreign political leaders are also potential targets of Soviet executive action operations and, according to recent information, the KGB's executive action component includes such persons among its targets. There is, however, no evidence proving that any Western leader has been the victim of Soviet executive action.

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2. LINSE died in a Soviet prison camp 15 December 1953, according to a statement issued by the Soviet Red Cross on 8 June 1960, a virtual admission of Soviet responsibility for the kidnapping. The cited date of his death is at variance, however, with information from fellow prisoners of LINSE who reported having seen him in 1954 and 1955.

Organization

The executive action component of the Soviet government is currently designated the Thirteenth Department of the KGB intelligence directorate (First Chief Directorate). The earliest known predecessor of the Thirteenth Department was the so-called "Directorate of Special Tasks" reportedly established within the NKVD in December 1936 for terror purposes. During World War II terror missions were performed by the NKGB Fourth Directorate, which was responsible for partisan activity behind German lines. In late 1945 or early 1946 this directorate was replaced by a unit of the MGB known as Spets Byuro #1 which was organized to retain Fourth Directorate personnel to support and direct partisan activities behind enemy lines in the event of a future war. In the summer of 1952, however, the long-range aspects of Spets Byuro #1's mission were abandoned, and emphasis was shifted to using all available agents for sabotage and other violent activities. Spets Byuro #1 was given a new, and at present still unknown, designation sometime in 1953 and assigned to carry out "special action tasks," such as sabotage, political murders and kidnappings. With the creation of the KGB in 1954, the executive action component was redesignated as the Thirteenth Department. Although the jurisdiction of the department is global, its main target areas are the United States and members of Western treaty organizations. There

is no evidence of the existence of any unit within the Soviet military intelligence component (the GRU) responsible for the type of executive action discussed in this paper, although the GRU reportedly can undertake such operations under certain circumstances.

The Thirteenth Department is believed to be divided into sections (otdeleniye) or directions (napravleniye) by countries or groups of countries, such as, for example, the United States ("the principal enemy"), England, Latin America, etc. At Moscow headquarters the department has approximately 50-60 experienced employees, and was last known to be headed by General (fnu) RODIN, who under the alias KOROVIN had previously been the KGB resident in Great Britain. Secrecy about the work of this department is maintained through the careful selection and training of its personnel; the officers do not discuss their experience among others; department documents are not circulated.

In addition to headquarters personnel, the 13th Department has its own support officers in legal residencies in Western countries and in some Satellite countries. Such support officers work under the instructions of the legal resident and the 13th Department. One of the more active groups is a unit in East Germany which numbers perhaps 20-30 persons. As of 1960 there was a group in China, but it probably no longer exists. Prior to 1955 there was also a group in Austria. In a country in which a support

officer of the 13th Department is stationed, the legal resident and the headquarters department for that country are aware of the targets of the 13th Department in that country, although they are not aware of illegal agents who are in direct contact with the 13th Department.

Although the Thirteenth Department is the KGB's executive action component, the Emigre (Ninth) Department directs all operations, including assassination operations, against Soviet emigres. The Emigre Department's assassination operations, however, are believed to be conducted jointly with the Thirteenth Department and sometimes other KGB components; for example, the counterintelligence directorate (Second Chief Directorate).

The 13th Department also supports the Disinformation (12th) Department of the First Chief Directorate in the latter's covert propaganda campaigns aimed at the creation of confusion and panic in Western countries. An example is the campaign conducted, in 1959 and later, for the purpose of creating adverse world opinion toward West Germany. This campaign included setting fire to synagogues and painting swastika signs in public places and attributing these acts to West Germans. Other operations in which both the Thirteenth Department and the Disinformation Department are involved include attempts to remove the threat to Soviet interests posed by certain members of Western governments. Sometimes this entails arranging for the dismissal of such persons from public office, but, in theory at least, it could mean "eliminating" them physically.

Installations

The defector, KHOKHLOV, described two laboratories associated with the executive action department. One produced special weapons and explosive devices, whereas the other developed poisons and drugs for "special tasks." The explosives laboratory was located near Kuchino, outside Moscow, and was responsible for the development and production of weapons, from drawing up blueprints to melting and pouring bullets. In no case was assistance obtained from military ordnance or other outside agencies.

The laboratory for poisons was supposedly a large and super-secret installation. No agents were permitted access to it or even knew of its location. KHOKHLOV could provide no first-hand information on it. Other sources, however, have reported the existence of this type of laboratory dating back to the purges in the late 1930's. A report from one source in 1954 described an experimental laboratory within Spets Byuro #1 known as the "Chamber" (Kamera"). This laboratory conducted experiments on prisoners and persons subject to execution to test the effectiveness of different powders, beverages and liquors and various types of injections, as well as research on the use of hypnotism to force prisoners to confess. Besides its staff, only certain high-level persons were permitted to enter its premises. Although its existence officially was kept a secret, it was generally suspected or known by many state security functionaries that a unit of this sort was maintained. The Soviet government allegedly abolished

the "Kamera" in October 1953, according to an announcement made to selected state security and Party officials, attributing the establishment and operation of the laboratory solely to BERIYA and his cohorts. Whether or not this step actually was taken does not rule out the possibility, however, of the same type of unit continuing to exist in some other form.

Training for executive action operations was conducted at a base in Moscow by a staff of instructors who specialized in such subjects as the use of small arms, jujitsu, code, wireless, driving, surveillance, and photography.

Although executive action operations outside the USSR are planned, directed, and sometimes carried out by state security staff personnel, a mission may also be performed by one or more agents recruited specifically for this purpose. KHOKHLOV himself, for instance, was categorically forbidden to assassinate OKOLOVICH personally. Two German agents, Hans KUKOWITSCH and Kurt WEBER, were to carry out the deed under KHOKHLOV's supervision. This reflected Soviet theory that indigenous personnel would have better access to the target, and also had the advantage of avoiding direct Soviet attribution. It appears from the STASHINSKIY case, however, that security considerations ruled out the involvement of non-Soviets in more recent operations.

Even though some sources have made statements to the contrary, it appears that the agents (as opposed to staff employees like STASHINSKIY) who perform executive action for the Soviets may be used for more than one

mission of this nature. KHOKHLOV spoke of special executive action units known as "boyevaya gruppa" (literally, combat groups) which consisted of indigenous agents and/or Soviet illegal staff officers situated outside the borders of the USSR on the territory of hostile governments or in close proximity thereto. Such groups were armed and prepared to perform executive actions when required to do so, either in time of peace or war. A group of this type under the direction of the executive action department base at Karlshorst ostensibly was involved in the kidnapping of Dr. Alexander TRUSHNOVICH, an NTS leader in West Berlin, in April 1954. KHOKHLOV believed the abductors to have been recruited and organized by the East German security service at the request of the KGB chief at Karlshorst. The same type of group was mentioned in connection with the abduction of Dr. LINSE; the actual abduction was reportedly performed by four German members of a "boyevaya gruppa" from East German. It is probable that such teams are a modern variation of the "mobile groups" described by a pre-war source as units dispatched from Moscow to foreign countries to assassinate Trotskyites and state security officers who refused to return to the USSR, as in the case of REISS and possibly KRIVITSKY.

Techniques

Many known or suspected executive action cases in the post-war period have involved the use of poison rather than guns or explosives. It is conceivable that the Soviets tend to favor poisons because murders can be accomplished more surreptitiously in this manner and in some instances without leaving easily recognizable traces of foul play. Drugs are also used to incapacitate a person temporarily for abduction purposes, as reportedly happened in the TRUSHNOVICH case and in the kidnapping of another NTS member, Valeri P. TREMMEL, from Linz, Austria in June 1954. There are, however, many unknown, uncontrollable factors in the use of poisons and drugs which limit and often preclude their usage. Probably the most important is the narrow span between a dose that will cause disability and one that will cause death. Dosages vary from one individual to another depending upon the person's weight, state of health, and the way the poison enters the body. The type used obviously is determined by the result desired. It is no problem to cause death, but often difficult to control dosage successfully when the objective is to incapacitate an individual only temporarily.

There appears to be no consistency in the use of poisons by Soviet intelligence to cause disability or death, or in the repetitious use of any one drug. Chemicals which have been used in cases known or suspected

to be Soviet instigated include arsenic, potassium cyanide, scopolamine, and thallium. Other likely substances are atropine, barbiturates, chloral hydrate, paraldehyde and Warfarin. Combinations of two or more substances may also be used, which further complicates diagnosis and tracing.

One well publicized poisoning case involved the defector Nikolay KHOKHLOV. KHOKHLOV suffered a sudden and severe illness while attending an anti-Communist meeting in Frankfurt, Germany in September 1957. A positive diagnosis was precluded by the initial treatment given him at a German hospital, but there was evidence of his having been poisoned by a thallium derivative of arsenic and/or other chemical agents, and a strong possibility that the poison had been administered at RIS instigation. KHOKHLOV himself believed, and allegedly had supporting medical opinion, that he had been poisoned by radio-activated thallium. He believed that the poison was of Russain origin because it was such a complicated substance that it was difficutl to analyze and had been carefully prepared to leave virtually no trace. A unique mechanism for administering poison was described by a knowledgeable source as a pneumatically operated poison ice "atomizer" which leaves no wound or other evidence of the cause of death. The equipment and techniques used in the poisoning of REBET and BANDERA are treated below in some detail as examples of the most recent and sophisticated methods in use by the KGB.

Specific Cases

I. STASHINSKIY

In November 1961 a Soviet intelligence officer, Bogdan STASHINSKIY, surrendered to the West German police, stating that he had, acting under official orders, assassinated two individuals during the previous few years: Lev REBET, a Ukrainian emigre writer; and Stepan BANDERA, a leader of the Ukrainian Nationalist movement. In both cases, a similar type of weapon had been used: a gun which fired vaporized poison which killed almost instantly upon being inhaled. The properties of the killing agent were such that, until the defection of the assassin, both victims were officially believed to have died from heart attacks. In the case of BANDERA, however, there was some unconfirmed suspicion of potassium cyanide poisoning although there was insufficient evidence to prove it.

The Weapon

The weapon used to assassinate REBET was a light-weight aluminum cylinder, 15-18 cm. long and approximately 3 cm. in diameter, and weighing about 200 grams. The cylinder was divided into three separate chambers, one of which contained liquid poison sealed hermetically into a plastic-type ampule container under low pressure. (At normal temperatures the poison would evaporate, disappearing without trace in about two minutes.) The three components could be assembled by means of a thread which allowed

one part to screw into the other. The first component was the poison ampule portion, the front end of which had a fine metallic screen. The poison ampule fitted solidly against the walls of the metal cylinder. The center component contained a piston and a piston arm which extended into the third or activating component. The latter contained a spring-mounted activating arm which, when drawn back, armed the weapon. A releasing arm was appended to the third component at an angle and was attached to the activating arm by means of a releasing catch. A small safety arm permitted the weapon to be placed in the safety position. The third component also contained a few grams of powder.

The maximum effective range of the weapon was about one-half meter; at one and one-half meters the effect of the vapors would be questionable; and at two and one-half meters, the vapors would be totally ineffective. (The assassin was instructed to fire the weapon only inches from the face.)

The weapon was activated as follows: The activating arm was pulled back and the safety released. The weapon was then activated. It was held in the palm of the hand in such a fashion that it fired when the user pressed the releasing arm towards the activating arm. The releasing arm, when pressed, acted upon the releasing catch, permitting the spring-held

activating arm to fly forward against the small charge of powder. The exploding powder (which made a noise approximating the sound of a loud handclap with the hands cupped) drove the piston arm forward, causing the piston to strike against the poison ampule. The poison was thus driven out through the fine screen in the form of a liquid spray.

The weapon used for the second assassination was similar, except that it was double-barrelled. Each barrel contained a charge of poison similar to that contained in the single-barrelled weapon; however, the two barrels could be discharged separately or together as a unit. Thus, in the event the first charge did not kill the victim, a second attempt could be made. The two barrels were welded together and the weapon had two releasing arms, two releasing catches, two safeties, and two activating arms. The effect of the poison was the same.

Utilization of the Weapon

For maximum effective results it is recommended that the liquid poison be shot directly into the face of the victim, in order to introduce the vapors most quickly into the respiratory system. Since the vapors rise upwards very rapidly, the poison is still effective when aimed at the chest; conceivably, this would be sufficient time to allow the victim time to scream.

Effects of the Poison

The effect of the poisonous vapors is such that the arteries which feed blood to the brain become paralyzed almost immediately. Absence of blood in the brain precipitates a normal paralysis of the brain or a heart attack, as a result of which the victim dies. The victim is clinically dead within one and one-half minutes after inhaling these poisonous vapors. After about five minutes the effect of the poison wears off entirely, permitting the arteries to return to their normal condition, leaving no trace of the killing agent which precipitated the paralysis or the heart attack.

Allegedly, no foreign matter can be discovered in the body or on the clothes of the victim, no matter how thorough an autopsy or examination. The liquid spray can be seen as it leaves the nose of the weapon, however, and droplets can also be seen on the face of the victim.

STASHINSKIY claimed that, before using the weapon on his first victim, he tested it on a dog. He fired the gun directly into the dog's face, holding his hand approximately one and one-half feet from its nose. Almost immediately after the liquid spray had hit its face the dog rolled over, without making any sound whatever. It continued to writhe for almost three minutes, however. STASHINSKIY was told that the poison affected a human much sooner, causing death within one and one-half minutes.

Safety Precautions for the User

STASHINSKIY was told that neither the poisonous liquid nor the fatal fumes affected any portion of the body other than the respiratory system, and that, since it could not enter the body through the skin or the pores, one could safely place his hands into a pail of the poison. Inasmuch as the weapon was held at arm's length when fired and the liquid spray ejected forward in a conical pattern, the user, under normal conditions, is safe from the effects of the poisonous vapors. Nevertheless, as an extra precaution, STASHINSKIY was provided with counteractive agents to use if he so desired.

Concealment Methods

For transportation, the weapon was transported hermetically sealed in a container, and inserted between sausages in a can which was itself hermetically sealed. It was suggested to STASHINSKIY that he should carry the weapon to the site of the planned assassination wrapped in a light newspaper, in which he had torn a small hole to enable him to reach the safety quickly just before using the weapon.

Method of Attack

In the first assignment, STASHINSKIY observed REBET debarking from a streetcar at about 0930 hours. Observing that the victim was heading for his office, the assassin preceded him into the building and climbed the

circular staircase to the first floor. On hearing REBET's footsteps on the staircase, STASHINSKIY turned and started walking down, keeping to the left, and carrying the weapon, wrapped in newspaper, in his right hand. The two met about halfway between the two floors. Firing directly into REBET's face from a distance of approximately one-half meter, STASHINSKIY continued walking downstairs without even breaking his pace. The victim lurched silently forward and fell on the staircase. While still in the building, STASHINSKIY shook off the liquid drops from the weapon and put it in the breast pocket of his suit. (A laboratory examination of the suit later revealed nothing of significance.) Although he had no reason to believe that he had inhaled the poisonous fumes, he used the counteractive measures provided. He later disposed of the murder weapon in a shallow canal in the city.

In carrying out his second mission, STASHINSKIY used a similar approach. Having previously abandoned an attempt to corner BANDERA in the latter's garage, the assassin gained entry into the victim's apartment house by reproducing a key which he had observed being used in the front door lock. On the day of the assassination, having seen BANDERA drive into his driveway, STASHINSKIY let himself into the apartment building and waited. BANDERA, carrying several packages of fruit and vegetables in his right hand, entered the front door with the aid of a key which was on a key ring together with other keys. As he was attempting to disengage the

key from the lock, STASHINSKIY moved away from the elevator, where he had been standing, toward the front door. The weapon was in his hand with the safety released. As he walked past the victim, who was still trying to extracate the key from the lock, the assassin took the door handle with his left hand, as if to assist BANDERA, asking him "Doesn't it work?" By this time, BANDERA had succeeded in pulling the key out of the lock. Almost at the instant he replied "Yes, it works," STASHINSKIY fired both barrels simultaneously into his face at almost point-blank range. Seeing the victim lurch backwards and to the side, the assassin walked out of the apartment building and closed the front door. Although he did not wait to see BANDERA drop to the ground, STASHINSKIY is certain that, contrary to press reports, the man did not scream or otherwise call for help. STASHINSKIY later threw the murder weapon into the same canal in which he had discarded the first weapon.

Although the press reported that BANDERA had been attacked physically before he was poisoned, STASHINSKIY insisted that he had used no force, since it had not been necessary to do so. Some newspapers also reported that BANDERA had died of potassium cyanide poisoning. STASHINSKIY claims that he was told, and believes, that the chemical was not potassium cyanide, since (1) he thinks that substance could not have been introduced into the body by the method employed, and (2) he believes the RIS would have no reason to

deceive him on this matter, especially since he had to be provided with counteractive precautions. STASHINSKIY claimed that one of his Soviet contacts was pleased to learn that the police suspected potassium cyanide, since this allegedly indicated that the true cause of the victim's death was not evident.

II. RADIO FREE EUROPE

The New York Times reported on an attempt to poison the staff of RFE on November 21, 1959, by placing atropine in the salt shakers of the cafeteria used by RFE personnel. Atropine is a derivative from the deadly nightshade plant; it can cause paralysis or death if taken in sufficient quantity. The amount of poison in each salt shaker was said to be 2.36% by weight of the contents. White crystalline alkaloid is indistinguishable from salt. (Unclassified, from NYT, 17 December 1959.)

III. STEIN

In March 1955, Lisa STEIN, an interviewer with RIAS, the American propaganda radio station in West Germany ("Radio in American Sector"), was fed candy containing the highly dangerous poison scopolamine. (scopolamine is used in the so-called "twilight sleep." Given in small doses it induces a kind of euphoria; in larger doses it is supposed to be a deadly poison.) It was intended that Frau STEIN would become ill and would be abducted. The plan was that the agent - someone whom Frau STEIN trusted and with whom

she was meeting in a West Berlin cafe - would offer the poisoned candy toward the end of the meeting. The lady was expected to become ill while walking from the cafe to her nearby residence. On becoming unconscious, she was to be picked up by a waiting car which would appear to be passing by chance. The plot was not carried to fruition, however, because Frau STEIN did not become ill until she was near her apartment, at which point neighbors came to her aid and she was moved to a hospital. She was severly ill for 48 hours, after which an antidote was found. (Unclassified, from the testimony of Theodor HANS, formerly with US Military Intelligence, Germany, September 21, 1960, before a Congressional investigating committee.)

IV. OTHER

Another weapon used is described as a noiseless gas pistol, powered by a 300 volt battery, which fires a lethal, odorless unidentified gas. The gas acts in two or three seconds, and is effective up to 15 or 20 meters. The pistol has three buttons: one for arming, one for firing, and the third for recharging the battery. (After 50 firings the battery may be recharged by plugging a transformer into normal house power source.) The pistol is normally fired 20 times, very rapidly and automatically -- "Bzzzd." Although one squirt could kill, 20 squirts are emitted in order to saturate the area,

since the gun is fired at a silhouette, rather than at a point.) The gas shot by the pistol would penetrate the victim's clothing and enter the skin. There is allegedly no danger to the user.

Trends

Since World War II, and especially in the years since Stalin's death, assassination attempts abroad have become increasingly rare. Currently the emphasis in the executive action field is placed on sabotage and sabotage planning rather than terrorism against individuals. The Soviets now apparently resort to murder only in the case of persons considered especially dangerous to the regime and who, for one reason or another, cannot be kidnapped. A kidnapped person is obviously more valuable inasmuch as the Soviets may be able to extract from him information of interest, as well as use him for propaganda purposes by making it appear that he defected to the Soviet side of his own free will. This course was followed in the case of Dr. TRUSHNOVICH. It is also likely that the Soviets find it increasingly difficult to find persons willing to undertake murder assignments, while the same may not be true of abduction operations. It can further be conjectured that the Soviets are now more concerned about the adverse publicity generated by Soviet assassinations in general than they were in previous years.

In this connection, comments made by state security defectors Petr DERYABIN and Yury RASTVOROV in 1954 about what the Soviets would or would not do are still of interest. Both believed that the Soviets would murder one of their officials on the verge of defecting if that were the only way of preventing the act. The same would apply to a Soviet official who had just defected if thereby state secrets could be preserved and if they believed that killing him would not bring about a more adverse situation in terms of politics and propaganda than already existed. DERYABIN and RASTVOROV doubted, however, that the Soviets would murder an official who had been in non-Communist hands long enough to have been exploited for intelligence and propaganda purposes. While both granted that in particular cases the Soviets might go to any extreme, they both believed, generally speaking, that the adverse propaganda resulting from such an act would negate its original purpose. On the other hand, KHOKHLOV, who might have been in a better position to know, has stated without qualification that the Soviets would continue to assassinate defectors in the future. The threat of Soviet executive action against defectors is also considered a real one by Reino HAYHANEN, who defected from the KGB in 1957. A still more recent Soviet intelligence source also believes that standard Soviet practice is to mount a kidnapping or assassination operation "through all intelligence opportunities" against defectors from the Soviet intelligence services.

DERYABIN and RASTVOROV further agreed that the Soviets, without hesitation, would forcibly return to the USSR someone on the verge of defecting at a mission abroad. This was borne out by the aforementioned STRYGIN and ZELENOVSKIY cases. DERYABIN and RASTVOROV also believed that the same policy would apply to a Soviet official who had just defected, or one who had been in non-Communist hands long enough to have been exploited for intelligence and propaganda purposes, if the capability existed for returning him physically to the USSR.

Lastly, DERYABIN believed that the assassination of an Allied official would be highly unlikely and probably unprofitable. He also doubted that the Soviets would attempt to kidnap any U.S. officials unless they were particularly knowledgeable. Such an incident would not be worth the trouble for an average official, but an important person conceivably would have sufficient information to make it worthwhile.

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